

On Pratibimbavada and Avacchedavada in Advaitavedanta

著者	Shima Iwao
journal or publication title	南アジア研究
volume	12
page range	29-49
year	2000-10-01
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2297/3065

On Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in Advaitavedānta

SHIMA Iwao

I. Introduction

Just 50 years ago, P. Hacker described the situation of Post-Śaṅkara Advaitavedānta studies in his introduction to the *Untersuchungen über Texte des frühen Advaitavāda 1. Die Schüler Śaṅkaras* as follows:

Eingehendere Untersuchungen über die Lehren der Jünger Śaṅkaras gibt es meines Wissens noch nicht. Toṭaka ist, soweit ich sehe, bisher überhaupt nicht beachtet worden, und über Sureśvaras und Padmapādas Lehrmeinungen macht nur DASGUPTA einige Mitteilungen im II. Bande seiner *History of Indian Philosophy*. Angesichts der großen Bedeutung der direkten Schüler Śaṅkaras wäre es indessen wohl wünschenswert, das ihre Gedanken ausführlicher dargestellt würden. Denn von ihnen gehen mehrere Richtungen der Advaitaschule aus, die in manchen Punkten voneinander abweichen. Was wir aber bis jetzt über diese Richtungen wissen, ist nicht viel mehr als das, was in Zusammenfassungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts darüber berichtet wird – vor allem in Appayadikṣitas *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*, und aus diesen Quellen, viel mehr als aus den originalen Texten, schöpft auch DASGUPTA für seine Darlegungen über die drei Traditionsrichtungen, die von Zeitgenossen des großen Śaṅkara ausgehen: die Richtung der Anhänger Sureśvaras und Sarvajñātmans, die Schule Padmapādas sowie seines Erklärers Prakāśātman und die Gefolgschaft Vācaspatimiśras, des alten Kommentators von Śaṅkaras Brahmasūtrabhāṣya. [Hacker 1950:4]

Thanks to Hacker's work, the thoughts of Śaṅkara's direct disciples (Sureśvara, Padmapāda, Toṭaka and Hastāmalaka) have been made sufficiently clear from a historical point of view, but when it comes to the development of Advaitavedānta thought after Śaṅkara's direct disciples, the situation mentioned above by P. Hacker has not much improved.¹ The present paper is intended as a small contribution to fill up this lacuna. I will discuss the thoughts of the *Vivaraṇa* of Prakāśātman and the *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspatimiśra, both of whom were situated a little bit later than Śaṅkara's four direct disciples.² The dis-

¹Of course, excellent studies on each of the texts have been made (for example, [Camman 1965] etc.).

²The dates of both are not yet fixed. With regard to the date of Vācaspatimiśra we can find three views: (1) around AD 841 according to G. Oberhammer, (2) around AD 890-984 according to S.A. Srinivasan and (3) around AD 976 according to P. Hacker [Kanazawa 1987:6]. With regard to the date of Prakāśātman, we can find two views: (1) AD 10th century according to K. Camman (1965:4-8) and (2) around AD 1200 according to S. Dasgupta (1932:30).

cussion will focus on the significance of *pratibimbavāda* (reflection theory) and *avacchedavāda* (limitation theory), which have generally been regarded as one of the most basic differences between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school in late Advaitavedānta.

II. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*

It is not clear exactly when the distinction between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* was established in Advaitavedānta. These two theories have usually been explained as they are described in the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*. I shall therefore first sketch the essentials of *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* as found in the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*.

1. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the *Siddhāntabindu*

According to the *Siddhāntabindu* of Madhusūdhana Sarasvatī (about AD 1500), there are three major theories in Advaitavedānta, namely, *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, and each theory has an ontological aspect as well as an epistemological aspect.

1.1. Ontological Aspect of the Three Theories

In their ontological aspect, these three theories are regarded as three different explanations of the relationship among Pure Consciousness (*caitanya* = *ātman* = *Brahman*), *Īśvara* (the Lord) and *jīvas* (individual souls).

According to the *ābhāsavāda* attributed to Suresvara, *Īśvara* is a semblance (*ābhāsa*) of Pure Consciousness conditioned by One Ignorance (*ajñāna*), whereas *jīvas* are semblances of Pure Consciousness conditioned by many intellects (*buddhis*) which are themselves products of Ignorance; and since a semblance is unreal, both *Īśvara* and *jīvas* are unreal [Siddhāntabindu: 26-28]. (***Īśvara* and *jīvas* are unreal.**) .

Two types of *pratibimbavāda* are mentioned in the *Siddhāntabindu*. According to the *pratibimbavāda* attributed to Prakāśātman, *Īśvara* is the prototype of Pure Consciousness (*bimba-caitanya*) conditioned by One Ignorance whereas *jīvas* are reflections (*pratibimbās*) of Pure Consciousness in One Ignorance as limited by many inner organs and impressions thereon.³ (***Īśvara* is the prototype and *jīvas* are reflections.**)

According to the *pratibimbavāda* attributed to Sarvajñātman, *Īśvara* is the reflection of

³ *ajñānopahitaṃ bimbacaitanyam īśvaraḥ, antaḥkaraṇatatsaṃskārāvacchinnājñānapratibimbitaṃ caitanyam jīvaḥ, iti vivaraṇakāraḥ* / [Siddhāntabindu: 28].

Pure Consciousness in One Ignorance and *jīvas* are the reflections of Pure Consciousness in many intellects, but the prototype of Pure Consciousness conditioned by One Ignorance is pure.⁴ **(Both *Īśvara* and *jīvas* are reflections and Pure Consciousness alone is the prototype.)**

Although these two *pratibimbavādas* differ as to what the prototype and the reflections, they both state that Ignorance is one (therefore *Īśvara* is also one) and that *jīvas* are many in accordance with the difference of their intellects. Both also agree that not only the prototype but also its reflections (*Īśvara* and *jīvas*) are real.⁵ **(*Īśvara* and *jīvas* are real. Ignorance is one, but *jīvas* are many in accordance with the difference of their intellects.)**

According to the *avacchedavāda* of Vācaspatimiśra, *Īśvara* is Pure Consciousness which has become the object of ignorance, and *jīvas* are Pure Consciousness which has become the support of ignorance.⁶ This means that ignorances limit Pure Consciousness, that Pure Consciousness as limited by ignorances is *Īśvara*, and that subject of ignorance is *jīva*. According to this theory there are as many ignorances as there are *jīvas*.⁷ The phenomenal world is different for each *jīva*, because each *jīva* is the material cause of its own phenomenal world by virtue of being conditioned by its own ignorance.⁸ **(Each *jīva* has its own ignorance which acts as the material cause of its own the phenomenal world.)** It is noteworthy that the *Siddhāntabindu* does not mention the *avaccheda*-relationship between Pure Consciousness and intellects in describing *avacchedavāda*.

After having described *avacchedavāda* the *Siddhāntabindu* proceeds to a discussion of *ekajīvavāda* (the theory of one *jīva*), *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* (the theory of world-creation by perception) and *anekajīvavāda* (the theory of many *jīvas*) . This order of description, beginning with *ābhāsavāda* and ending in *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda* or *anekajīvavāda*, is exactly the same as that followed by J. Simha (1971:221ff), which shows that Simha mostly follows the description of the *Siddhāntabindu* in his discussion of *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, and so forth.

⁴ *ajñānapratibimbitaṃ caitanyam īśvaraḥ, buddhipratibimbitaṃ caitanayaṃ jīvaḥ, ajñānopahitaṃ tu bimbacaitanyaṃ śuddham iti saṅkṣepaśārīrakakārāḥ* / [Siddhāntabindu: 28]. *ajñānopahitaṃ tu bimbacaitanyaṃ śuddham* does not fit for the corresponding portion of the *Saṅkṣepaśārīraka* (III.277-278), where it is stated that *bimba* (prototype) is not associated with Ignorance and intellects. Therefore, there is a possibility that *ajñānopahitaṃ* is a misreading of *ajñānānupahitaṃ* by the editor of the *Siddhāntabindu*.

⁵ *anayoś ca pakṣayoḥ buddhibhedāj jīvanānātvam / pratibimbasya ca pāramārthikatvāj jahallakṣaṇaiva tattvamādipadeṣu* / [Siddhāntabindu: 28].

⁶ *ajñānaviśayībhūtaṃ caitanyam īśvaraḥ, ajñānāśrayībhūtaṃ ca jīva iti vācaspatimiśrāḥ* / [Siddhāntabindu: 29].

⁷ *asmīṃś ca pakṣe ajñānanānātvāj jīvanānātvam* / [Siddhāntabindu: 29].

⁸ *pratijīvaṃ ca prapañcabhedāḥ, jīvasyaiva svājñānopahitatayā jagadupādānatvāt* / [Siddhāntabindu: 29].

1.2. Epistemological Aspect of the Three Theories

In their epistemological aspect these three theories are three ways of explaining how *Īśvara*'s knowledge differs from that of *jīvas*, and what the function is of the transformation (*vr̥tti*) of the intellects of *jīvas*.

Because ignorance has acquired an identity with Pure Consciousness through semblance with it, all its products become necessarily permeated by Pure Consciousness through semblance with it. Accordingly, Pure Consciousness as the cause of the universe (*Īśvara*) makes everything manifest at all times without the need of any means of knowledge, because Pure Consciousness possesses the quality of making manifest everything connected with it. Thus *Īśvara* is omniscient.

Jīvas, on the other hand, are limited by their intellects and can therefore know only the objects that are connected with their intellects. Their intellect consists of three parts: the part within the body, the part which permeates the object and the part between the body and the object. In each of three parts Pure Consciousness manifests itself. Pure Consciousness as manifested in the part of the intellect within the body is called the knower. As manifested in the part of the intellect between the body and the object, it is called the means of knowledge. And as manifested in the part of the intellect which permeates the object, it is called the object of knowledge. This object of knowledge is Pure Consciousness as not yet known. When it is known, it is called the result of knowledge. [Siddhāntabindu: 31-33].

According to both the *ābhāsavāda* and the *pratibimbavāda*, the purpose of the transformation of the intellect is to forge a connection of Pure Consciousness in the object with Pure Consciousness in the knower, and to remove the veil over Pure Consciousness inside the object. This view differs from that of the *avacchedavāda* according to which the purpose of the transformation of the intellect is only to remove the veil, because the *jīva*, being the material cause of the universe, is connected with everything. This is the distinction. [Siddhāntabindu: 34].

1.3. Attitude of the *Siddhāntabindu* Reconciliatory

The description in the *Siddhāntabindu* clarifies the difference among *ābhāsavāda*, *praibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, but gives us no clue as to why these different theories came to be established. In fact, the *Siddhāntabindu* does not mention any point of mutual criticism among those three theories, which would be useful for us to understand the historical development of those theories. The reason for this non-critical approach is to be sought in the fundamental attitude of this work to those three theories.

In that respect, an opponent raises the following question:

Since divergent views with respect to the real are impossible, how can [all]

these mutually inconsistent views be authoritative? Therefore, [it should be determined] which [of these three views] is to be discarded and which is to be accepted.⁹

The author replies:

The distinction between *jīva* and the Lord [of the Universe] and forth, though it is mere product of the human intellect, is nevertheless alluded to in the Scriptures, because ideas like that are a helpful means to lead us to the knowledge of the truth.¹⁰

Thus, according to the *Siddhāntabindu*, the three theories are equally helpful in imparting a knowledge of the truth. Considering this reconciliatory attitude of the *Siddhāntabindu*, it is quite natural that no treatment of these mutual criticisms among the three theories is found in it. Let us now proceed to the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*.

2. Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*

According to the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* of Appaya Dīkṣita (about AD 1550), there are two major theories, namely, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, and each theory has only an ontological aspect.

2.1. Description of Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda

In the *Siddhāntabindu* only two types of *pratibimbavādas* were described, but from the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* we learn that there existed various types of *pratibimbavāda*. The works which hold *pratibimbavāda* are: *Prakāṭhārthavivaraṇa*, *Tattvaviveka*, *Samkṣepaśārīraka* of Sarvajñātman, *Citrādīpa*, *Brahmānanda*, *Dṛgdr̥śyaviveka* and *Vivaraṇa* of Prakāśātman.¹¹ Although the *pratibimbavāda* set forth in these works are mutually different, the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* classifies them into three types. The first is the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Prakāṭhārthavivaraṇa*, *Tattvaviveka*, *Samkṣepaśārīraka*, which holds that Pure Consciousness is the prototype and both *Īśvara* and *jīvas* are reflections of it. The second is the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Citrādīpa*, *Brahmānanda*, *Dṛgdr̥śyaviveka*, which also holds that *Īśvara* is the reflection of Pure Consciousness.¹² The third is the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Vivaraṇa* of Prakāśātman, which is described as follows:

⁹*nanu, vastuni vikalpāsambhabhāt katham parasparaviruddhamataprāmāṇyam, tasmāt kim atra heyam kim upādeyam iti cet* [Siddhāntabindu: 30].

¹⁰*jīveśvaravibhāgādikalpanās tu puruṣabuddhimātrapravabhā api śāstreṇānūdyante, tattvajñānopayogitvāt* / [Siddhāntabindu: 30].

¹¹*Tattvaviveka*, *Citrādīpa* and *Brahmānanda* are *Pañcadaśī* Chap. 1, 6 and 11-15 respectively.

¹²The difference between the first and the second is not so clear as far as the prototype and the reflection are concerned.

The followers of the *Vivaraṇa*, however, say thus: ...Since it is taught that only a single Ignorance is the adjuncts [which causes] the difference between the *jīva* and the Lord, the difference between the *jīva* and the Lord is through their being reflection and prototype, not through both of them being reflections, because it is impossible for both to be reflections, in the absence of two [different] adjuncts. ...Of the *jīva* that is a reflection of Ignorance, the particular transformation of Ignorance, which is of the form of the internal organ, is the place of distinctive manifestation, as the mirror is for all-pervasive light of the sun. Hence too is the empirical usage of that (*jīva*) as having that (internal organ) for adjunct.¹³

The above description of the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Vivaraṇa* has the following two points in common with the corresponding description in the *Siddhāntabindu*: (1) **Īśvara is the prototype and *jīvas* are reflections**, (2) **Ignorance is one, but *Jīvas* are many in accordance with the difference of their internal organs**. Thus, both texts have an identical understanding of the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Vivaraṇa*.

The description of *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*, on the other hand, is quite different from that in the *Siddhāntabindu*. The *avacchedavāda* attributed to some (*anye*) is there described as follows:

Therefore, Pure Consciousness, which is limited (*avacchinna*) by the internal organ like the ether, is the *jīva*; what is not so limited is the Lord .¹⁴

The *avacchedavāda* is here described in terms of the *avaccheda*-relationship between Pure Consciousness and the internal organ. No mention is made of the object and the support of ignorance, which were essential points in the description of *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntabindu*. Such a difference in the ways of description of *avacchedavāda* between the two texts looks a bit puzzling to me.¹⁵

2.2. Mutual Criticism between *Pratibimbavāda* and *Avacchedavāda*

In the description in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* we find many points of mutual criticism which are not found at all in the *Siddhāntabindu*. In this mutual criticism we

¹³ *vivaraṇānuṣāriṇas tv āhuḥ /...ekasyaivājñānasya jīveśvaravibhāgopādhitvapratipādanād bimbapratibimbabhāvena jīveśvarayor vibhāgaḥ nobhayor api pratibimbabhāvenopādhidivayam antareṇobhayoḥ pratibimbatvāyogāt / ...ajñānapratibimbitasya jīvasyāntaḥkaraṇarūpo ajñānapariṇāmabhedo viśeṣābhivyaktisthānaṃ sarvataḥ prasṛtasya savitrīprakāśasya darpaṇa iva atas tasya tadupādhiakatvavyavahāro’pi / [Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha: 17].*

¹⁴ *tasmād ghaṭākāśavad antaḥkaraṇāvacchinnaṃ caitanyaṃ jīvaḥ tadanavacchinnaṃ īśvaraḥ / [Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha: 18].*

¹⁵ Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that both ways of description were so well-known that either way of description was sufficient for each text.

find many points of criticism of *avacchedavāda* by *pratibimbavāda*, but criticism of the latter by the former is very rare. The main point of criticism of *pratibimbavāda* by *avacchedavāda* is as follows:

The reflection of what is not conditioned by colour-form does not stand to reason; much more is this so in the case of what is color-formless (i.e., Pure Consciousness).¹⁶

Among the many points of criticism of *avacchedavāda* by *pratibimbavāda* I cite only one example which contains the same points of criticism found in the *Vivaraṇa* itself.

Since thus Pure Consciousness as within the world is defined in its entirety in the form of *jīvas*, by the respective internal organs as adjuncts, for the Lord, who is of the nature of Pure Consciousness devoid of that definition, there would be existence outside the world alone. In that case, the declaration of existence in the midst of modifications as the Inner Controller, such as in "He who stands in cognition (i.e., the *jīva*)" will be contradicted. On the reflection-theory, however, since the reflected ether is seen even while there does exist the natural ether present in the water, the existence in two forms in one place is intelligible.¹⁷

Here the point of criticism is that *Īśvara* who is not limited by the internal organ cannot be the Inner Controller within the *jīva* who is limited by the internal organ. However, the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* later concludes this topic by pointing out that *pratibimbavāda* has also the same defect, because the prototype (*Īśvara*) which is not within the adjunct (*upādhi*) cannot exist within the modifications (e.g., internal organ) of the adjunct. In this way this text is also as reconciliatory in its nature as the *Siddhāntabindu*.

After having described *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* proceeds to describe *ekajīvavāda*, *anekajīvavāda*, *dr̥ṣṭisr̥ṣṭivāda*. This way of description is just the same as that of S. Dasgupta (1932: 474ff.) which does not contain the explanation of *ābhāsavāda*. This shows that S. Dasgupta mostly follows the description of the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* in explaining *pratibimbavāda*, *avacchedavāda*, etc.

¹⁶ *rūpānupahitapratibimbo na yuktaḥ sūtārāṃ nīrūpe...* [Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha: 18].

¹⁷ *..aṇḍāntarvartinaś caitanyasya tattadantaḥkaraṇopādhibhiḥ sarvātmanā jīvabhāvenāvacchedāt tadavacchedarahitacaitanyarūpasyeśvarasyāṇḍād bahir eva sattvaṃ syāt iti yo vijñāne tiṣṭhann ityādāv antaryāmibhāvena vikārāntaravasthānaśravaṇaṃ virudhyate / pratibimbapakSe tu jalagatasvabhāvikākāśe saty eva pratibimbākāśadarśanād ekaṭra dviguṇīkṛtya vRttir upapadyate...* [Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha: 18]. Cf. [Vivaraṇa: 290].

2.3. Some Noteworthy Points

While comparing the descriptions of *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*, we found some noteworthy points. These can be summarized as follows:

1. *Ābhāsavāda* is described in the *Siddhāntabindu* but is not mentioned in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* which contains much more extensive descriptions than the *Siddhāntabindu*.
2. An epistemological aspect is described in the *Siddhāntabindu* but is not mentioned under the topic of *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*.
3. The way of description of *avacchedavāda* differs in both texts.
4. There existed various *pratibimbavādas* but only one type of *avacchedavāda*, namely, that of Vācaspatiśrī.
5. As far as the *pratibimbavāda* of the *Vivaraṇa* is concerned, both texts understand it in the same way.

In the light of the above findings, the following assumptions can be made:

1. It seems that there was no common understanding of *ābhāsavāda* in late Advaitavedānta.
2. There seems to have been a common understanding of *pratibimbavāda* in late Advaitavedānta.
3. Whether there was a common understanding of *avacchedavāda* or not is not sure.

These assumptions lead me to the following doubts:

1. Is the difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* really one of the most basic differences between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school in late Advaitavedānta, as has generally been thought?
2. Is this view a mere reproduction of the views of the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* through the views of famous Indian scholars like S. Dasgupta, J. Simha and so on?

These doubts will be reconsidered in the next part of this paper.

III. Establishment of *Pratibimbavāda* and *Avacchedavāda* in Advaitavedānta

As mentioned above, we do not yet know when the distinction between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* was established in Advaitavedānta. In the present section I want to discuss the establishment of *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* in Advaitavedānta.

In order to determine the date of the establishment of these two theories, I will use the following two criteria:

1. Whether these two theories were regarded as conflicting views or not?
2. Whether technical terms like *pratibimbavāda* or *pratibimbapakṣa* and *avacchedavāda* or *avacchedapakṣa* were used or not?

Let us begin with the view of Saṅkara (about AD 700-750).

1. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Saṅkara

Saṅkara says the following about the relationship between *Īśvara* and *jīvas*:

Just as the light of the sun or the moon which pervades the entire space apparently becomes straight or bent when the limiting adjuncts with which it is in contact, such as a finger, for instance, are straight or bent, but does not really become so; and **just as the ether, although it apparently moves when jars are being moved, does not really move; and just as the sun does not tremble, although its image trembles when you shake a cup filled with water in which the sun's light is reflected;** just so the Lord is not affected by pain, although pain be felt by that part of him which is conjured up by ignorance, and limited by the intellect and other adjuncts, and called the individual soul.¹⁸

Here Saṅkara uses two examples (the ether limited in jars and the reflection of the sun in water which are applicable to *avacchedavāda* and *pratibimbavāda* respectively) in exactly the same way in order to explain the difference between *Īśvara* and *jīvas*. This shows that Saṅkara does not regard *avaccheda* and *pratibimba* as two conflicting views.

¹⁸*prakāśaḥ sauras candramaso vā vyadvyāpyāvatiṣṭhamāne'ṅguly-ādy-upādhi-saṁbandhāt teṣu rjjuvagrādibhāvaṁ pratipadyamāneṣu tattadbhāvam iva pratipadyamāno'pi na paramārthatas tadbhāvaṁ pratipadyate / yathā cākāśo ghaṭādiṣu gacchatsu gacchan iva vibhāvyamāno'pi na paramārthato gacchati, yathā codaśarāvādikampanād tatgate sūryapratibimbe kampamāne'pi na tadvan sūryaḥ kampate, evam avidyāpratīyupasthāpīte buddhyādyupahite jīvaākhye'ṁśe duḥkhāyamāne'pi na tadvad īśvaro duḥkhāyate / [Brahmasūtrabhāṣya II.3.46: 624] .*

2. *Pañcapādikā* of Padmapāda

While discussing the establishment of 'I'-consciousness (*ahamkāra*) or *jīva* in the *Pañcapādikā*, a commentary on the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, Padmapāda (about AD 720-770) uses the following examples in the same context [Pañcapādikā: 112ff.]:

1. The redness (= *ahamkartṛtva*) of a red flower (= *upādhi* = *ahamkāra*) reflected in a crystal (= Pure Consciousness = *ātman*).
2. An image (= a non-objective aspect of *ahamkāra*) of a face (= Pure Consciousness = *ātman*) reflected in a mirror (= *ahamkāra*). This example is applicable to *pratibimbavāda*.
3. The big ether (= Pure Consciousness = *ātman*) and a small amount of ether (= *jīva*) limited in a jar (= *upādhi*). This example is applicable to *avacchedavāda*.
4. A rope mistaken for a serpent, etc.

Padmapāda concludes as follows:

And all these examples are for the purpose of removing the doubt that may arise regarding what has been established by the Scriptures, conformatory logic and experience, and also for mental comfort; it is not for the sake of directly establishing the thing itself (i.e., *ātman*).¹⁹

This shows that Padmapāda also regards these examples just as mere examples and does not see any conflict between *pratibimba* and *avaccheda*.

3. *Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa* of Prakāśātman

So far we could not find an example suitable for the two criteria mentioned above, but in the *Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa*, a commentary on the *Pañcapādikā*, we can find such examples.

Prakāśātman refutes a criticism of *pratibimba* as follows:

Since even the reflection of color-formless Brahman is possible like the reflection of the color-formless ether in water with clouds and stars [in it] and the far and wide ether is seen even in water as high as one's knees, it is impossible to say that the reflection of clouds and the like is connected only with the ether in water.²⁰

¹⁹ *etac ca sarvam udāharaṇajātaṃ śrutitannīyānubhavasiddhasya tatasambhāvanāparihārāya budhisāmyārthaṃ ca, na vastuna eva sākṣāt siddhaye* // [Pañcapādikā: 113].

²⁰ *amūrtasya cākāśasya sābhranakṣatrasya jale pratibimbavad amūrtasya brahmāṇo'pi pratibimbambhavāt, jānumātrapramāṇe'pi jale dūraviśālākāśadarśanāt, jalāntarākāśa evābhrādipratibimbayukto dr̥ṣyata iti vaktum aśakyatvāt* / [Vivarāṇa: 289] .

The point of criticism refuted here, namely, the impossibility of the reflection of color-formless Brahman (= Pure Consciousness), is almost the same as that described above in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*.

Prakāśātman further criticizes an idea of *avaccheda* as follows:

If Brahman-Egg, limited by adjuncts in the Egg [of the world], were limited entirely in the state of *jīva*, unlimited Brahman would exist outside the Egg [of the world]. Therefore, in that case, Brahman would not be omnipresent and would not be the Inner Controller etc., because an unlimited existence confined to limited places, and thus having divided into two parts does not stand to reason.²¹

Here the point of criticism is that *Īśvara* who is not limited by the internal organ cannot be the Inner Controller within the *jīva* who is limited by the internal organ. This point also is the same as that described above in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*.

Prakāśātman further insists on the superiority of the idea of *pratibimba* over that of *avaccheda* using the term *pratibimbapakṣa* as follows:

In the case of *pratibimbapakṣa*, on the other hand, the existence [of the ether] being divided into two parts in the same place is possible, because the reflection of the ether is seen only when the natural ether is in water. Therefore [in the same way] it is possible for Brahman-Egg to exist in the form of Inner Controller etc. in the limitations of *jīvas*. Thus *pratibimbapakṣa* is superior [to *avacchedapakṣa*].²²

Thus it seems clear to me that the difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* was already established at the time of Prakāśātman. What then about the *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspatimiśra, a commentary on the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara?

4. *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspatimiśra

As mentioned above, the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* describe *avacchedavāda* in a different way. The former defines it from the point of view of the object and the support of ignorance, whereas the latter defines it from the point of view of the *avaccheda*-relationship between Pure Consciousness and the internal organ. Keeping this in mind, let us examine the texts in the *Bhāmatī*.

²¹ *upādhibhir aṇḍāntavartibrahmaṇaḥ sarvātmanā jīvabhāvenāvacchinnatvād anavachinnasya brahmaṇo'ṇḍād bahir eva sadbhāvaprasaṅgāt tatra sarvagatasarvaniyantrītvādi brahmaṇo na syāt / avacchinnapradeśeṣu anavachinnasya dviguṇīkṛtya vṛtṭiyogāt* / [Vivarāṇa: 290].

²² *pratibimbapakṣe tu jalagatasvabhāvikākāśe saty eva pratibimbākāśadarśanād ekatraiva dviguṇīkṛtya vṛtṭyupapatteḥ jīvāvacchedeṣu brahmaṇo'pi nīyantrītvādirūpeṇāvasthānam upapadyate iti pratibimbapakṣa eva śreyān iti* / [Vivarāṇa: 290-291].

Vācaspatimiśra discusses an *avaccheda*-relationship between the Highest Ātman (= Pure Consciousness = Brahman) and the *jīva* as follows:

The Highest Ātman as limited by the adjuncts is the *jīva*.²³

Here the adjuncts mean the body, the internal organs and so forth. If we follow the definition of *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha*, we may conclude from this description that the *Bhāmatī* holds an *avacchedavāda*.

As for the support of ignorance, Vācaspatimiśra says the following:

The inner self limited by the internal organs etc., the intelligent being compounded of the "this" and the "not-this" [elements], is the *jīva*, the agent, the enjoyer, **the support of the two kinds of ignorance** – the result and the cause, – the substrate of "I-ness", the transmigrator, the vessel of the entire host of woes, the material cause of the superimposition;...²⁴

And with regard to the object of ignorance, Vācaspatimiśra says the following:

This is what is said: it is established that just as the stream [of the existence of the serpent], which has for its material cause the rope in conjunction with the ignorance of the rope, exists if the rope exists, and is absorbed in the rope itself, just so the universe, which has for its material cause Brahman in conjunction with ignorance, exists in Brahman alone and is absorbed in that.²⁵

If we understand the word *avidyā-sahita-brahma* in the sense that Brahman is affected by ignorance (although this interpretation is not evident), we could conclude that the *Bhāmatī* regards Brahman as the object of ignorance. The description of *avacchedavāda* in the *Bhāmatī* differs, however, in one important respect from that in the *Siddhāntabindu*. The *Bhāmatī* in fact clearly says that Brahman in conjunction with ignorance is the material cause of the universe, and this view is quite different from that in the *Siddhāntabindu* where *jīva* is said to be the material cause of the universe. This misunderstanding of the view of the *Bhāmatī* by the *Siddhāntabindu* and the different descriptions of *avacchedavāda* in the *Siddhāntabindu* and the *Siddhāntaleśasaṃgraha* sharply contrast with the complete agreement in the understanding of *pratibimbavāda*

²³ *paramātmaiva copādhikalpitāvacchedo jīva iti* / [Bhāmatī III.1.1: 658] .

²⁴ *tad anenāntaḥkaraṇāvacchinnaḥ pratyagātmā idamanidaṃrūpaś cetanaḥ kartā bhoktā kāryakaraṇāvdyādvayādhāro'haṃkāraspadam saṃsārī sarvānarthasaṃbhārabhājanaṃ jīvātmā itaretarādhyāśopādānaḥ* / [Bhāmatī, Upodghāta: 45].

²⁵ *etad uktaṃ bhavati – yathā rajjvājñānasahitarajjūpādānā dhārā rajjvām satyām asti, rajjvām eva ca līyate, evam avidyāsahitabrahmopādānaṃ jagat brahmany eva asti, tatraiva līyate iti siddham* / [Bhāmatī I.1.2: 95].

in both texts. This leaves the impression that *avacchedavāda* is attributed as a view of the *Bhāmatī* from the side of *pratibimbavāda*.

Vācaspatimiśra sometimes further explains the relationship between the Highest Ātman and *jīva* also in terms of *pratibimba*-relationship, as follows:

Thus the *jīva*, as limited by the material cause, namely *avidyā*, is regarded as the reflection of the Highest Ātman.²⁶

Accordingly, for the *Bhāmatī*, *avaccheda* and *pratibimba* do not seem to be two conflicting views.

As a tentative conclusion, we can say only this much: the difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* was already established at the time of Prakāśātman. But it is not certain when exactly this difference was first established, because the date of Prakāśātman itself is not fixed yet. However, we can at least reply to the following statement by P. Hacker.

Vācaspati lebte gegen Ende des 10. Jahrhunderts. Leider läßt sich einstweilen nicht bestimmen, ob Prakāśātman älter oder jünger ist als er. [Hacker 1953: 44].

Vācaspatimiśra is older than Prakāśātman.

IV. Appendix: Significance of Pratibimbavāda and Avacchedavāda and Substantialization of Ignorance in the *Bhāmatī*

As mentioned above, after having described *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, the *Siddhāntabindu* finally comments on these three theories as follows:

The distinction between *jīva* and the Lord [of the Universe] and forth, though it is mere product of the human intellect, is nevertheless alluded to in the Scriptures, because ideas like that are a helpful means to lead us to the knowledge of the truth. [Siddhāntabindu: 30].

Here the *Siddhāntabindu* says that the assumptions of the division into the *jīva* and the Lord of the Universe etc., which *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* teach in different ways, are mere products of the human intellect. This means that the division into the *jīva* and the Lord of the Universe etc., as taught by the *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda*, are considered to be mere products of ignorance by the *Siddhāntabindu*. This raises serious doubts about the generally held view that the

²⁶ *evam avidyopādhānakalpītavacchedo jīvaḥ paramātmāpratibimbakalpah...* / [Bhāmatī II.2.10: 502].

difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* constitutes one of the most basic difference between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school. That general views is based on the interpretations of famous Indian scholars such as S. Dasgupta, J. Simha and so on, which are themselves based upon the descriptions in the *Siddhāntaleśasamgraha* and the *Siddhāntabindu* respectively. Now if this view of the *Siddhāntabindu*, which was a standard summary book of the doctrines of Advaitavedānta, reflects the general understanding among late Advaitins, how can the difference between *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* be a significant basic difference either theologically or philosophically between the Vivaraṇa school and the Bhāmatī school ? Although it is difficult to answer this question, we can at least find a clue in the substantialization of ignorance after the *Bhāmatī*.

As is well-known, according to Śaṅkara, ignorance is a wrong or mistaken cognition as when we mistake a rope for a serpent, and the fundamental ignorance (*avidyā*) is the mistaking of non-*ātman* for *ātman* as well as of *ātman* for non-*ātman*, on which our 'I'-consciousness depends. Thus *avidyā*, according to Śaṅkara, is basically an epistemological problem, although ontological problems, such as the levels of reality, are also discussed by him in terms of the concept of *avidyā*. This means the following:

Suppose there is a cup here and I perceive it. The fact that I perceive this cup is certain for me, but it is not so certain whether the form and color of this cup as perceived by me are the same as those perceived by my cat. Further, whether this cup perceived by me really exists or not is also not so sure. With regard to this problem, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika hold that whatever is expressible (*abhidheya*) and cognizable (*prameya*) really exists as it is, but Śaṅkara holds just the opposite view. According to Śaṅkara, for any cognition including perception to be possible, we first need the framework of subject and object and also the articulation of the object (the perceived world) by concepts and language, both of which are mere products of ignorance. That is to say, not only the cup perceived by me, but also I who perceive the cup, are established only through *avidyā*, because the framework of subject and object itself is the product of ignorance which mistakes non-*ātman* for *ātman*, as well as *ātman* for non-*ātman*. Therefore, when this *avidyā* disappears, concepts, language and the framework of subject and object also disappear. And when I (cognizer) and the world (object of cognition) disappear, *ātman* = *Brahman* which is their base appears. And in this process, of course, meditation is indispensable.

But even though the cup as well as 'I' are mere products of ignorance and therefore not real, still the fact that I now perceive the cup remains. What is the mechanism at work here? How can both be mere products of ignorance? Śaṅkara did not discuss this in detail. It was Padmapāda who discussed this problem in detail by explaining the establishment of 'I'-consciousness and its mechanism. A later development of his discussion is reflected in the epistemological aspect of the *ābhāsavāda*, *pratibimbavāda* and *avacchedavāda* as described in the *Siddhāntabindu*.

Another problem concerns the reality of the world (the object of perception) and 'I', especially the reality of 'I'. We can somehow understand that the world (the object of perception) disappears in the process of meditation, but it is difficult for us to understand that 'I' including body, intellect and 'I'-consciousness etc. also disappears in this process, unless we have really had an experience of the disappearance of 'I' in meditation. Śaṅkara's and Vācaspatimiśra's views of the bodyless-state (*aśarīratva*) indicates that both did not agree on the nature of meditative experience.

Śaṅkara says following about the bodyless-state:

Therefore it is established that **so-called liberation differs from all the fruits of action to be performed, and is an eternally and essentially disembodied state....**But this (*mokṣa*) is the Highest Reality, eternal without undergoing any changes, omnipresent as ether, free from all modifications, absolutely self-sufficient, not composed of parts, of self-luminous nature. **That bodiless entity in fact, to which merit and demerit with their consequences and threefold time do not apply, is called liberation; ...It (i.e. *mokṣa*) is, therefore, the same as Brahman** in the inquiry into which we are at present engaged. If Brahman were represented as supplementary to certain actions to be performed, and liberation were assumed to be the effect of those actions, it would be non-eternal, ...²⁷

Śaṅkara here says that the bodyless-state is the state of liberation (*mokṣa*) as well as Brahman itself. But how does our body disappear, when ignorance (*avidyā*) is sublated?

The *Bhāmatī*, on the other hand, explains about the relationship between the body and *avidyā* as follows:

Surely, through frequently repeated texts beginning with "Existence alone, this was in the beginning, dear one" and ending in "That thou art", which are helpful for Brahman-inquiry, there arises the true indubitable knowledge of the inner self **as different from the body etc., the material cause (*upādāna*) of which is beginningless ignorance (*avidyā*)**; in spite of this, there is the continuance of notions of transmigrations and consequent empirical usage, because of the continuance of the impressions of ignorance;...²⁸

²⁷ *ata evānuṣṭheyakarmaphalavilakṣaṇaṁ mokṣākhyam aśarīratvaṁ nityam iti siddham /...idaṁ tu pāramārthikaṁ, kūṭasthanityaṁ, vyomavat sarvavyāpi, sarvavikārahitaṁ, nityatṛptaṁ, niravayavaṁ, svayaṁjyotiḥsvabhāvaḥ / yatra dharmādharmau saha kāryeṇa kālatrayaṁ ca na upāvartete / tad etad aśarīratvaṁ mokṣākhyam / ... atas tad brahma yasyeyaṁ jīṇāsā prastutā, tad yadi kartavyaśeṣatvenopadiśyeta, tena ca kartavyena sādhyac cen mokṣo abhyupagamyeta, anitya eva syāt / [Brahmasūtrabhāṣya I.1.4: 116-121].*

²⁸ *satyaṁ, 'sad eva somyaedam ' ity upakramāt, 'tat tvam asi' ity antāc chaddād brahma-*

The *Bhāmatī* says here that *avidyā* is the material cause (*upādāna*) of our body etc., and naturally the inner organ might be included in "etc.". According to the *Bhāmatī*, *avidyā* is not mistaken knowledge as in Śaṅkara's case, but is the material cause of our body and inner organ, etc. This means that when our *avidyā* disappears, our body etc. also disappear; just as a pot disappears when clay which is its material cause disappears. This substantialization of *avidyā* might be one of the means to make us understand rationally or logically how our body etc. disappear, when *avidyā* disappears. Padmapāda also substantialize *avidyā* in different context.²⁹ Such substantializations of *avidyā* by Padmapāda and the *Bhāmatī* naturally resulted in the substantialization of the world in Advaitavedānta. Consequently, it also led to the development of dualistic tendency indicating the duality (*dvaita*) of Brahman = *ātman* and *avidyā*, especially if only One Ignorance (*avidyā*) is taught, as was done by Prakāśātman. Thus it seems to me that the substantialization of *avidyā* beginning with Padmapāda and the *Bhāmatī* is closely connected with problems such as one ignorance or many ignorances, the object and the support of ignorance, and *pratibimbavāda* or *avacchedavāda* etc. as their background. In this sense the following words of P. Hacker seem to be still very suggestive.

Die Vivartalehre tendierte trotz ihres eindeutigen Illusionismus dazu, ein Ausdruck der Bejahung zu wenden, je mehr man sie als bloß Feststellung hinnahm. Die Negation der Welt wollte ja nicht bloß theoretisch anerkannt, sondern praktisch (meditativ-quietistisch) vollzogen werden. Sobald dies ihr dynamisches Element übersehen wurde, verlor sie mit der exakten Einfügung ins System ihren eigentlichen Sinn – sie näherte sich der Bejahung, und der Monismus dem Dualismus. [Hacker 1953: 237-238].

[Texts]

Brahmasūtrabhāṣya = *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara. Ed. by N. S. Anantakṛṣṇa Śāstrī and V. L. S. Paṇṣikar, *The Brahmasūtra Śāṅkara Bhāṣya with the Commentaries Bhāmatī, Kalpataru and Parimala*, Bombay: Nirṇaya Sāgar Press, 2nd ed., 1938.

Bhāmatī of Vācaspati Miśra. Cf. *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*.

Pañcapādikā of Padmapāda. Ed. by Śrīrāma Śāstrī and Krishnamurthi Śāstrī, *Pañcapādikā of Śrī Padmapādācārya with Prabodhapariśodhinī of Ātmasvarūpa and Tātparyārthadyothinī of Vijñānātmana and Pañcapādikāvivarāṇa of Śrī Prakāśātman with Tātparyadīpikā of Ātsukhācārya and Bhāvaprakāśikā of Nṛsiṃhāśrama*, Madras Government Oriental Manuscript Series CLV, Madras: Government Press, 1958.

mīmāṃsopakaraṇād asakṛdabhyastāt, nirivicitse'nādyavidyopādānadehādyatiriktapratyagātmatattvābadoḥ jāte'pi avidyāsaṃskārānuvṛttāv anuvartante sāṃsārikaḥ pratyayās tadvyavahārās ca; [Bhāmatī I.1.1: 58].

²⁹He interpretes the word *mithyā-jñāna* in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* of Śaṅkara as *mithyā-ajñāna* and as its result he interprets *mithyā-jñāna-nimittaḥ vyavahāraḥ* as *anirvacanīya-avidyā-upādānaḥ lokavyavahāraḥ* [Pañcapādikā: 26].

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- Vivaraṇa = Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa of Prakāśātman. Cf. Pañcapādikā.

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